

# THE ANNALS AND MAGAZINE OF NATURAL HISTORY.

No. 51. DECEMBER 1841.

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XXIX.—*Notice of a new genus of Mammalia discovered by J. Stuart, Esq., in New South Wales.* By W. S. MAC-LEAY, Esq., &c. &c.

[With a Plate.]

DURING a residence of two years in this colony, the experience of each day shows me that as yet but little is known of the productions of New Holland. The natural history of the interior of this vast island may indeed be considered as altogether unknown; and with respect to the coast, we can only be said to be in a considerable degree acquainted with the birds and phænogamous plants of certain of its particular districts. An animal lately discovered by Sir T. L. Mitchell, and called *Chæropus ecaudatus*, appears to connect the genera *Perameles* and *Hypsiprymnus*. Being so singular in the dentition and the structure of its feet, this animal may lead us to imagine the sort of novelties that exist inland; but it is also very sure that the neighbourhood of Sydney still offers the discovery of many new quadrupeds to the research of an active collector. The marsupial called by the colonists “the Red Shrew Mouse,” and which has been supposed by Sir T. L. Mitchell to be a *Myrmecobius*, proves now to be a new and minute species of *Perameles*; that is, if I may be allowed to judge from the feet of the two stuffed specimens in the Colonial Museum, the only ones I have seen\*. Although not giving much attention to the study of the species of Mammalia, I hear frequently of the occurrence of small Marsupials, which I suspect will prove, when described, entirely new to zoologists. One thing is certain, that many small Rodents remain undescribed, from their having been confounded with the rats and mice imported from Europe; and I think sufficient reasons will be given in the present notice for believing that a new insectivorous quadruped is to be found in the immediate vicinity of Sydney. The cause of the small quadrupeds having so long escaped notice appears to be, that they are all, whether marsupial or not, in their habits nocturnal; but the truth also is, that few persons here have leisure to look for them. Birds, however worthless for

\* The teeth are not visible in either of the specimens.

the table, afford practice and amusement to the sportsman; but these minute Mammalia are despised even by the native, who moreover, from his custom of suspending all chase of game after dark, is little likely ever to fall in with them.

J. Stuart, Esq., is a surgeon in the army, who has been frequently employed by the Colonial Government in superintending the quarantine to which vessels arriving unhealthy in Port Jackson are subjected. On entering between the heads of this noble firth, every vessel is boarded by the medical officers, and if found in a sickly state, instead of sailing up to Sydney, a distance of about seven miles, she is carried off to the right, and enters Spring Cove, where the passengers are landed at a Lazaretto, established on the north shore. Here they remain under the care of a surgeon for the necessary period; and Mr. Stuart, who has often undertaken this painful charge, has, by means of his admirable skill in drawing objects of natural history, and his powers of accurate observation, been enabled to employ to the advantage of every department of science those spare hours, which otherwise, in the midst of contagion and disease, would have proved so dreary.

From among several great novelties which I have found in his collection of drawings, I have selected the representation (natural size) here given, Pl. VII., of a quadruped which I shall call *Antechinus Stuartii*, and of which Mr. Stuart killed one male specimen at Spring Cove in August 1837. As this specimen has been unfortunately lost, and I have never seen it, I am obliged to describe it from his notes, hoping that the attention of naturalists will be drawn to the animal, and that some further knowledge may soon be acquired with respect to the habits and structure of the species.

#### Genus ANTECHINUS.

Dentes incisores  $\frac{6}{6}$ ; canini  $\frac{1-1}{1-1}$ ; pseudomolares  $\frac{3-3}{3-3}$ ; molares  $\frac{4-4}{4-4} = 44$ .

*Caput* elongatum, rhinario valdè producto. *Aures* grandes ad apicem angustiores obtusæ. *Oculi* mediocres prominuli. *Corpus* pyri-forme anticè angustius. *Cauda* teres pilosa gracilis. *Pedes* digitis liberis plantigradi; anticè pentadactyli; digitis tribus intermediis longioribus; posticè pentadactyli digitis secundo et tertio longioribus, pollice brevi, unguibus brevibus acutis.

#### ANTECHINUS STUARTII.

*Antechinus fulvus* abdomine artubusque subtùs albescentibus, caudà ferè corporis longitudinem æquante.

*Long. tot.* usque ad apicem caudæ  $9\frac{1}{2}$  unc.

This genus appears, in its system of dentition, to approach *Phascogale*, but it differs from that and all other carnivorous Marsupials in the formula of the incisors; for those carnivorous

